

# The Builder.

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**D**URING the last ten days we have visited Glasgow, Paisley, Ayr, Kilmarnock, Dundee, St. Andrews, and some other parts of bonnie Scotland, and have derived much gratification and advantage from the journey. A spirit is awakening in this portion of the United Kingdom in respect of architecture and the other fine arts which can scarcely fail to produce good effects, and should be sedulously nurtured by all there in authority. Until within a very few years ago energy in Glasgow, the second city in Scotland, confined itself to making money and providing physical comforts. Education has been long sought there, and very widely given, but it was, and to a great extent is, of that kind which is popularly called the "useful," as placed erroneously in opposition to what is called the "ornamental." The usefulness of the beautiful, to repeat an expression which best conveys our meaning, was not appreciated, and is only now beginning to be so. The value of the fine arts was not recognised,—architecture amongst them was neither understood nor cared for.

The course pursued at the time of the reformation, to which we alluded in our recent notice of Edinburgh, the destruction of the numerous fine ecclesiastical structures with which Scotland was studded, and the evil opinion attached to such buildings by their association with forms of religion that had become hateful to the mass of the people, contributed in no slight degree to induce this state of feeling. The prejudice thus raised lasted long, but its power has been gradually weakened; and, as a worthy citizen, Mr. Archibald McLellan, observes, in his "Essay on the Cathedral Church of Glasgow," "It must now be to every Scotsman a matter of regret, that the reformation, which swept from our land the nummeries of papal superstition, should have with indiscriminate fury prostrated alike the idol and the temple which contained it—and thus recklessly and wantonly deprived us of those great national structures, in the possession of which we could once boast competition with our more powerful and wealthy southern neighbours."

Scott had not feared before this, though Mr. McLellan wrote in 1833, to put the same sentiment in the mouth of Andrew Fairservice, in "Rob Roy," when describing the narrow escape which Glasgow Cathedral had, solely through the bravery of the townsmen, who, when the "Commons o' Renfrew and o' the Barony, and the Gorbals," came into Glasgow one fine morning to try their hand on purging the high kirk, assembled under the then Dean of Guild (he was a good mason himself, it fortunately happened), and offered them battle, rather than let them destroy the building. A compromise was accordingly effected: the statues of saints were taken out of the niches, and destroyed, but the church remained whole; and, as Andrew is made to remark, "I ha'e heard wise folk say, that if the same had been done in ilka kirk in Scotland, the Reform would just ha'e been as pure as it is e'en now, and we wad ha'e had mair Christian-like kirks."

All honour to the men of Glasgow for the good blow they struck that day! The cathedral, or High Church as it is called, is an exceedingly interesting structure, and though long suffered to lie neglected and gradually to fall into ruin, is now, as our readers are aware, being restored under the direction of Mr. Edward Blore. The crypts, the most interesting and extensive we have ever seen, have been carefully attended to, and are now in a good state: only a short time ago they were unapproachable, full of earth, and miserably defaced. The different levels of the ground produce, in the crypts, a variety and picturesqueness of effect quite unexampled elsewhere. St. Mungo's well, by the way, which is in the crypt, is covered up to look more like a copper with the lid on, than anything else, but this is a trifle of which, amongst much that has been done well, we will not complain. A ramble through the crypts is full of interest, and it is increased by the intelligence and knowledge of the building displayed by the little daughter of the beadle who acts as guide.

In the nave, restoration has been going on for some time, and, so far as relates to the stonework, it seems quite satisfactory. Of the new roof, however, we must express a very different opinion, and can scarcely believe that it is in accordance with the views of the able architect who has the direction of the works. A ceiling of waggon-head shape has been formed in plaster. Narrow ribs spring (in the direction of the width of the nave), from side to side, at the intervals formed by the main pillars and arches which carry the triforium and clerestory, and these ribs are coloured stone-colour. The intermediate spaces are formed into panels (on the arched face of the ceiling) by narrow ribs, and, together with the latter, are painted of a bright wainscot-colour, much more like oil-cloth than oak-boarding, which it is intended to represent. The effect is not by any means satisfactory.

The west tower, in whose favour an effort was made by some of the architects of the town a short time since, as mentioned in our pages, has been pulled down nearly to the ground, and will not be reinstated. We are disposed to regret it.

The Molendinar Burn (or stream) which runs at the east end of the cathedral and skirts the necropolis, adds much to the beauty of the view; but if it must be used as a sewer, which is now the case, should be treated as such, and covered over. The effluvia from it at times is quite pestiferous. Some other means of taking off the sewage will be devised, it is to be hoped, before long, and should extend to the river Clyde, which now receives the whole sewage of the city, and then has to be cleansed from it, by dredging, at an immense annual expense.

This and other matters, in connection with the sanitary condition of the city, are now engaging the attention of many of the most able and influential men in Glasgow, who wisely seem resolved at once to attempt remedial measures. Their strong feeling led them, in conjunction with some of the principal architects of Glasgow, during our stay in the city, to pay us a compliment of a very flattering character, so much so, indeed, that we may perhaps subject ourselves to grave charges by alluding to it. Inasmuch, however, as it was paid rather to the journal than to ourselves, and we feel (it is to be hoped excusably) proud of their kind opinion, we have ventured to condense from the *Glasgow Herald* a notice of the occurrence

which appeared in that journal, omitting some flattering expressions that accompanied it.\*

Much requires to be done in Glasgow to render it as salubrious as it might be, and ought to be. The *ryades*, as they are called, or narrow alleys and courts, opening out of many of the leading thoroughfares, which present a fair face to a foul disfigurement, are fearful hot-beds of disease and crime, and require the most sweeping reform.

A praiseworthy attempt is being made by the ex-provost, Mr. Lumsden, to provide improved dwellings for workmen, by the erection of a pile of building in the New City-road, Glasgow, containing thirty-one dwellings, each consisting of one main room with two bed-chambers, and to be let for about 6*l.* a-year each, including gas, water, bedsteads, stove, and other conveniences. The building is designed by, and is being erected under the able superintendence of, Mr. James Wyllson, architect, who is well known by his writings to our readers. It seems so well adapted to its purpose, that we shall next week give a fuller account of it.

A wonderful improvement in the architectural appearance of the streets of Glasgow has been effected within a comparatively short period of time, for which the city is greatly indebted to the late Mr. David Hamilton, architect, of whose career we gave a notice some time ago. The Exchange, the Union Bank, the British Linen Company's Bank, and the Western Club, are amongst his most important works, and entitle his name to a worthy place in every list of British architects.

The façade of the Union Bank, we may mention, displays six large statues, by Mr. Mossman, of considerable merit. M. Marochetti's statue of the Duke of Wellington, in front of the Exchange, seems to have little to recommend it. *Appropos* of sculpture, we here saw a copy of Mr. Fillani's bust of Professor Wilson, the redoubtable "Christopher

\* On Saturday evening an interesting conversation took place in the house of Mr. J. W. Wilson, architect, for the purpose of meeting Mr. Godwin, F.R.S., an editor of *The Builder*. The suite of apartments was thrown open to the visitors, in which was laid out a fine collection of articles of art. Among these we observed two magnificent Florentine vases of ivory mounted with gold, carved in mezzo-relievo, and attributed to Benvenuto Cellini. Several curious specimens of early Indian architecture, of elaborate workmanship, attracted considerable attention, as also did a large collection of exquisite casts of antique gems. The walls were profusely adorned with electrotype, paintings, engravings, arabesques, and fruit decorations, by M. Calman, and with Mr. Wyllson's own interesting collection of professional drawings, prints, and casts. After the various objects of art, laid out for inspection, had been leisurely examined, Mr. Lumsden opened the proceedings by stating that Mr. Godwin had come from London, by invitation, to lecture to the members of the Glasgow Athenæum, on the history of architecture, hoping thereby to diffuse a taste for a noble art. A number of Mr. Godwin's professional brethren in town, and of other gentlemen who take a deep interest in the progress of art, having expressed a desire to meet this gentleman, Mr. Wyllson had handsomely taken the requisite measure for gratifying this desire, and the result was the present meeting, which he was glad to say, included many of our leading citizens. There were, by doubt, many agreeable subjects which might have called for their attention on that occasion, but in present circumstances they could not better bestow their time than in conversing on the subject of *Sanitary Reform*, regarding which Mr. Godwin would, no doubt, readily inform them what had been done in London, and what he would suggest to be done in Glasgow. Mr. Godwin expressed his willingness to meet this wish, though altogether unprepared. He might be able, however, hereafter to offer some suggestions through the columns of *The Builder*. The question of sanitary reform was at present engaging the attention of men of the highest intellect; and he could not suggest a better plan to the authorities of Glasgow than to offer one or more premiums of such an amount as would induce able men to apply their skill to the particular local circumstances of this city, with a view to its sanitary improvement. He proceeded to detail at considerable length what was being done in London; the effect that proper paving, &c., had been found to exercise on the duration of life; the form of sewer that had been discovered to be the best, which was of an egg shape, with the narrow end downward—this form of sewer being best capable of cleansing itself,—and the plan employed to save the contents of the sewers. His reception here had been highly gratifying to him; but, while much struck with the beauty of Glasgow, he had not overlooked the pestiferous *ryades*, which he strongly urged should be effectually improved. A lengthened practical discussion followed, in which the advantages of improved drainage, for the benefit of health, and the importance of securing the contents of sewers for fertilising purposes, were strongly urged. The meeting was altogether an instructive one. Amongst the gentlemen present we observed the Lord Provost, Archibald Hunter, Esq., M.P.; James Lumsden, Esq.; Balair Smith; Balair Gilman; the Lord Dean of Guild; Mr. A. Liddell; Rev. James Cunningham; Dr. McGregor; Dr. Eoson; &c. — *Glasgow Herald*.